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ABSTRACT

This minicourse, designed for use with "After High School, Book 5" of the Educational Opportunities in Virginia series, consists of six 50-minute guidance sessions to be conducted over 5 to 6 weeks. Session 1 is an orientation to course materials and a discussion of chapter 1 of the text. Session 2 is a decision-making activity to help students understand the steps in making important educational and career decisions. Session 3 is a class discussion regarding the major kinds of educational programs after high school in Virginia, as these relate to students interests and aptitudes. Session 4 is devoted primarily to providing financial aid information to students and parents. Session 5 focuses on career exploration and identifying sources of career information. Session 6 consists of career planning team reports, class discussion, and course evaluation. (TE)

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ACTIVITY GUIDE

FOR

AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, BOOK 5

Educational Opportunities in Virginia Publications

CG 022629

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Activity Guide for After High School, Book 5

This minicourse consists of six 50-minute guidance sessions to be conducted over five to six weeks, several days to one week apart. It is recommended that counselors take primary responsibility for conducting the sessions, with teachers co-leading many of the activities. To assist those conducting the minicourse, some general time frames are suggested in this guide for carrying out session activities. Counselors and teachers are encouraged to expand upon and/or modify the suggested activities according to the needs of students and their own creativity.

It is advisable for counselors to provide in-service for teachers who will participate in conducting the activities. This will help the staff to become familiar with the contents of the booklet and activity guide and techniques for presenting the sessions. Before the first session, parents should be informed about the booklet and minicourse through newsletters, parents' meetings, and other media approaches. They also should be informed of the dates and times of the course sessions and invited to participate in them.

Each student will need a copy of After High School and a notebook or part of a notebook to record information and ideas gained through course activities.

SESSION I

Orientation to course and materials (10 minutes)

- Explain to the students that this minicourse is designed to help them make decisions and plans about their future education and/or careers. Distribute the booklets; emphasize the importance of early planning for posthigh school education and career.

- Present an overview of the booklet, including the preliminary information on inside of front cover, the table of contents, chart of Educational Choices After High School, and key words section.

- Discuss how the booklets may serve as a useful resource for students and parents; emphasize their sharing the booklets with their parents.

- Point out the importance of obtaining additional information from sources beyond this booklet. Indicate that there are listings of suggested resources throughout the booklet for getting further information. Take time to locate these listings with them; for example, page 14.

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

- Introduce Chapter 1, page 2 of booklet. Highlight the topic headings in the chapter.

- Ask the students to read the first two sections, Why Consider Education After High School and Will You Be Able to Pay for Further Education. Assist them with any words that might cause difficulty in comprehending the information provided.

- Conduct a class discussion about their reactions to the section, Why Consider Education After High School, and their responses to the questions in it. Encourage the students to focus upon their own thoughts and possible plans for the future during this discussion.

- In conducting the discussion, encourage the students to realize that through this course they can get information and ideas to help them think more clearly about themselves and their futures.

- Stress the availability of financial assistance for posthigh school education at universities, colleges, and other kinds of schools. Refer to Chapter 3 in the booklet as a good resource of information about financial aid.

Presentation of the Information in Know Yourself, page 4 (10 minutes)

Begin this presentation by pointing out that most people do not understand themselves as well as they might like to. Assist the students to identify aspects of themselves which should be considered in making plans for the future, such as their interests, abilities, aptitudes, likes, and dislikes. Explain the meaning of these terms and provide examples. Elicit some examples from them, too.

- Following this explanation, ask the students to list in their notebooks some of the things they already know about themselves, such as their abilities, interests, likes, and dislikes. Help them get started by giving some examples of your own abilities, interests, etc. Allow a few minutes for them to do this activity. Tell them they will be able to add to this list as they learn more about themselves.

- Then ask them to list what else they would like to know about themselves. Assure them that these lists will be private and for their own purposes. Allow about five minutes for them to do this activity. Students may refer to page 4 in the booklet in developing their lists.

Development of Action Plans to Learn More About Yourself (15 minutes)

- Suggest that students develop individual action plans for getting further information about themselves. In making their plans, they will need to decide how, where, from whom, and when they will obtain the information. It is suggested that a two-week time limit be set for carrying out the action plans so the information they gather may be used during the third session of this minicourse. Students should record their action plans in their notebooks.

The following format, or a similar one, may be employed in developing these plans:

	Information Needed (What Do You Need to Know?)	How or Where Will You Get This Information?	When?	Check Each Item As it is Completed
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____

Etc.

Example:	1.	My abilities	Review my test scores with my counselor, talk with my teachers.	Wednesday Free Period	X

- Suggest that the students begin to gather this information as soon as possible. Because the action plan activities are to be completed by the third session of the course, tell them the date of the third session. Suggest also that they record in their notebooks what they learn about themselves as a result of their action plans.

Discussion of Know About Education and Know About Related Information. pages 4 and 5 (5 minutes)

- Briefly summarize each of the topics, emphasizing how the students will benefit from the suggestions made in these sections. Explain that the remaining chapters of the booklet will provide much information about these topics and ideas for getting further information. In addition, class time will be allocated during future sessions to learn more about these topics.

- Assure students that they will not have to make final decisions about their future education or careers in this course and that this course is designed to help prepare them for making their decisions.

Ask the Students to Complete the Following Activities Before The Next Session:

- Finish reading Chapter 1, pages 2-5.

- Begin to carry out your action plans to learn more about yourself.

- Take the booklet home: show it to your parents and tell them about the purposes of the course. Ask them to read the booklet, including the chart of Educational Choices After High School on page vii, and to read Chapter 1. Discuss the chart and chapter with your parents after you and they have read it. Record in your notebook answers to the following question for discussion at the next session.

  What questions do you or your parents have about the topics in the chapter?

SESSION 2

Brief Discussion of Student Activities (10 minutes)

Elicit students' discussion of the activities assigned to them at the end of the first session. The counselor or teacher should list on a chart or chalkboard questions for which students and parents need further information. Explore with the class ways in which they may get answers to their questions. Encourage the students who brought questions to obtain answers to them according to the resources suggested in the discussion.

Conclude by emphasizing the importance of going through the process of learning about themselves, about the various educational programs, about related information, and about careers in order to make good decisions for the future.

Decision Making Activity (40 minutes)

This activity is to help students understand the steps in decision making. Divide the class into groups of five or six members. Introduce this small group activity by asking the students for their ideas about some simple rules to follow in the small discussion groups.

Be sure that the following are included:

- Stay on the subject
- Take turns speaking
- Listen when others are speaking

Present the following situation to them. You may list some of the key facts on the chalkboard as you present it.

John is a 17-year old high school junior who plans to continue his education after high school graduation. He has dreamed for years about having a small sports car of his own. Each year his grandfather has given him a gift of money for his birthday. This money has been deposited in a special savings account. Including interest earned, there is now $3,200 in that account. His parents will allow him to withdraw up to $3,000 of this money to buy a car. They also have told him the following:

- He may not spend more than $3,000 for a car.
- He will have to be responsible for the costs of automobile insurance ($300 per year), licenses, gasoline, and repairs that the car may need in the future.
- He must get a part-time job in order to keep the car and help pay for the costs of his education after high school graduation.

Other important facts:

1. John has been searching for a part-time job for some time. The only one which he has found is a job as a newspaper distributor. This job will require him to deliver large quantities of newspapers in his own car to approximately 20 newspaper carriers early each morning. He will be paid $50 weekly.

2. John is on the basketball team and is a student leader. As a result, he must practice or attend meeting most days after school.

Using the following decision-making steps, what should John do in deciding what kind of car to buy?

Step 1. Identify the possible choices (How can John find cars he can afford among those that are available?)

Step 2. Gather information about each possible choice. (What kind of information about these cars should he get?)

Allow the groups to complete steps 1 and 2. Following this, have the groups report briefly about their discussions. (About 5 minutes)

Now provide the groups with the following information:

John has identified four cars as possible options. They are as follows:

- A 1979 red, two-passenger sports car for $2,200. The car has 65,000 miles and will need new tires and minor repairs. It has very little trunk space. It uses regular gasoline and averages 14 miles per gallon in city driving.

- A 1976 blue, six passenger station wagon for $2,400. It has 50,000 miles and is in good condition. It uses regular gasoline and averages 18 miles per gallon in city driving.

- A 1980 green van for $2,700. It has 39,000 miles and is in good condition. It uses unleaded gasoline and averages 15 miles per gallon in city driving.

- A 1981 green four-passenger sedan for $2,800. It has 31,000 miles and is in good condition. It has a fairly large trunk. It uses unleaded gasoline and averages 20 miles per gallon in city driving.

Using the following decision-making steps, decide which of the cars John should buy.

Step 3. Consider each possible choice in terms of John. (What factors must he take into account?)

Step 4. Rank the possible choices from the highest to the lowest, according to what may be best for John.

Step 5. Look at the highest-ranked choice. Does it seem much more beneficial to John than those ranked below it? If so, this choice would seem the best decision for John.

Step 6. If there seems to be little difference in benefits between the highest-ranked choices, what should be done next in order for John to make a decision?

Ask the groups whether or not they were able to reach a decision about the car John should buy. Have each group report which car they decided John should buy and why they chose that one? Did they have difficulty deciding? If so, why?

Point out that this same decision making process can be used in deciding upon future education and career choices. Review with them the decision-making steps on page 5 of the booklet. Discuss these in terms of making educational and career decisions.

Ask the Students to Complete the Following Activities Before the Next Session:

- Read Chapter 2, Educational Programs.
- Ask your parents to read it.
- Bring to the next session a list of questions you or your parents may have about what you read in this chapter.
- Continue to carry out your action plans. They should be completed and brought to the next class session. (Ask if students have encountered any difficulties in carrying out their action plans. Make suggestions to help resolve any difficulties.)

SESSION 3

This session may be held in the classroom or career resource center.

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

Conduct discussion regarding the major kinds of educational programs after high school in Virginia. Pose questions to stimulate their thinking, such as the following:

1. What similarities did you see among these educational programs? (Examples: each has entrance requirements, application procedures, admission requirements, programs of studies, etc.)
2. What differences did you see among them? (Examples: they vary in length, types of programs, types of degrees or certificates, occupations for which they may prepare students, costs, etc.)
3. Which types of programs seem most interesting to you at this time? Why?
4. How can you learn more about the programs which interest you? (The counselor or teacher may list on a chart students' responses to this question.)

   - Ask the students to report questions they or their parents have after reading Chapter 2. Give the class the opportunity to answer these questions and, where appropriate, to suggest next steps for getting necessary information.
   - Bring students' attention to the checklists on the last page of the booklet. Suggest that they check off each item as they complete it.

A look at other sources of information about posthigh school educational programs (20 minutes)

- Have on hand a variety of publications and materials about posthigh school educational programs. Include some of those materials suggested in the booklet as additional sources of information you may have. Be sure to have several which are representative of each type of educational option. These materials should be arranged in interest centers in the classroom according to types of program, e.g., four-year institutions, two-year institutions, etc. Students should be encouraged to move freely among these centers at their own pace.

- Allow time for the students to examine the materials and familiarize themselves with the kinds of information in them. Be available to answer questions they may have about these materials and their use.

- Prearrange for the school librarian or another resource person to participate with the counselor or teacher in explaining which materials about posthigh school educational programs are available in the school, where they are located, how they are organized, and the best practices for using them. Students' questions about these materials should be answered. If educational search computer programs are located in your school, they should be demonstrated either during this session or at another designated time.

Conclusion of Action Plan Activity to Learn More About Yourself (20 minutes)

Have students use the following format or a similar one to summarize in their notebooks information they have gathered about themselves:

1. My abilities

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. My interests

3. My aptitudes

4. My likes

5. My dislikes

6. My strengths

7. My shortcomings

8. Other information about myself

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Conclude this activity by reminding the students that this information about themselves, along with facts about educational programs, financial aid, and careers, must be considered in making educational and career decisions.

Ask Students to Complete the Following Activities Before the Next Session:

- Read Chapter Three, Financial Aid.
- Ask your parents to read the chapter.
- Invite your parents to attend the next session of the course for a presentation on financial aid. Emphasize to the students that financial aid is available for many kinds of posthigh school education and training and, thus, the session can be of value to each of them. Distribute invitations for them to give to their parents; these should state the purpose, time, and place for the session.

SESSION 4

This session is devoted primarily to providing financial aid information to students and parents. It is also an opportune time to involve parents more directly in their children's activities in the course and in their educational/career planning.

The session may be held in the evening to accommodate parents employed during the day. Consideration also may be given to having two classes of students and their parents meet together for this session.

If possible, arrangements should be made in advance for a financial aid officer from a nearby postsecondary institution to present the financial aid information and answer questions. If such a person is not available, the counselor may make the presentation. Suggestions for presenting financial aid information are provided in the session outline which follows.

Introduction to Session (20 minutes)

- Welcome to parents; explain the course and its purposes. Distribute copies of After High School for parents to examine; allow time for them to look through the booklet and to ask questions. Stress the importance of parental involvement in course activities and in helping their children to make educational and career choices and plans. Review and discuss with them the suggestions in A Message to Parents: How Can Parents Help? page 2 of the booklet. (The booklets should be collected at end of session.)

Presentation on Financial Aid (30 minutes)

- The order in which the financial aid information is presented should parallel the sequence in which the information is presented in Chapter Three of the booklet. Present the information in such a way that parents and students may ask questions during the discussion of each type of aid. Be sure to emphasize the importance of seeking further information about financial aid from postsecondary institutions their children may attend.

- Have on hand various types of financial aid applications for parents and students to see and discuss. It is helpful to have copies of a sample financial aid form completed for a fictitious person to give to them. Also, be certain to present information and distribute brochures or fact sheets about financial aid programs which may have been initiated since the writing of the booklet.

Ask Students to Complete the Following Activities Before the Next Session:

- Look through Chapter Four, Careers, and read page 32.

- Read about the career areas which seem most interesting to you.

- Have your parents read Chapter Four.

SESSION 5

Introduce Chapter 4, Careers. (5 minutes)

Discuss informally the information on page 32. Stress the following concepts:

- There are educational requirements for entering almost all careers.

- In choosing the kind of education you may want after high school, it is good to have a general idea of the career direction in which you may want to go.

- In choosing possible careers, you will want to consider the education required for them.

- The key to entering a career and advancing in it is education.

- The chapter contains information about careers. This information is organized in broad career areas according to the interests and characteristics of workers in them. For example, people in scientific careers are interested in science and mathematics; they tend to be precise and enjoy solving problems.

- Within each career area there are many types of occupations. These vary in the type of work performed and the education needed for them.

- You will be able to change your mind later about the career field which seems interesting to you now. You should, however, think about possible career choices in order to make initial plans for the kind of education or work you will enter after graduation from high school.

Sources of Career Information. (20 minutes)

Review with the students the information in Know About Careers, page 5 of the booklet. Have on hand the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, and other career information materials for students to examine and use during this session and the next one. Explain how these materials are organized and how they may be used. Also, arrange in advance for a demonstration of the Virginia VIEW and other computer career search programs in the school. This demonstration may take place in the career resource or media center rather than in the classroom. It may be held during the class session or at another convenient time.

Identifying Career Areas for Exploration. (25 minutes)

Ask each student to select for further study and exploration one career field which seems especially interesting. Before the students make their selections, they should look at the descriptions of the types of occupations and the characteristics of workers in each career field. Emphasize the importance of comparing the information about the characteristics of workers in specific career fields with the information they have learned about themselves and their own characteristics. It is advisable for students to select for exploration career fields in which workers have characteristics similar to their own.

- Have the class form teams of approximately four students each, according to career areas they have chosen to explore. For example, three or four students who have chosen to explore mechanical careers may form a team. There may be several teams for a single career field if many students have decided to explore the same one.

- The task of each team is to collect information about the career field they will explore. They are to find out the following:

  - Approximately 12 to 14 occupations for their specific career field. (These should be occupations other than those listed on the charts in the booklet).

  - The kinds of work people perform in these occupations and where they may be employed.

  - How to qualify for entry into these occupations.

  - Any further information about the characteristics of workers in the career field selected.

- Inform the students that they may divide the task of collecting information among the team members. The team task of collecting the information is to be completed as a homework assignment for the next session.

- Time will be allocated at the next session for each team, using the information gathered, to develop and make a brief oral report, approximately 3-5 minutes in length, about the career fields students have studied.

Ask Students to Complete the Following Activities Before the Next Session:

In addition to completing the career exploratory team assignment, tell your parents about the career field you are studying and share with them the information you have collected.

SESSION 6

Team Planning for Career Reports (5 minutes)

- This time is allocated for the career exploration teams to organize the information they have gathered and plan oral reports, approximately three to five minutes in length. The reports should be organized so each team member will have an opportunity to present information.

Team Reports (30 minutes)

- Each team should present its report. In cases where more than one team has explored the same career field, their reports should be presented sequentially. At the conclusion of the reports, ask the students if they are still interested in the fields they chose to explore. Encourage them to continue independently further career exploration activities.

Class Discussion About Finding a Job, page 53 (5 minutes)

- Discuss briefly the information in this section and answer questions students may have.

Course Evaluation (8 minutes)

- Ask the students to write down their opinions of the course, benefits they may have derived from it, and suggestions for improving it. Tell them that they do not have to put their names on their papers. A rating scale may be used for this evaluation, if desired. Collect the evaluations and use the students' feedback in modifying future course plans.

Conclusion (3 minutes)

- Stress the importance of students using the booklet throughout their junior and senior years in high school as a resource to help plan for the future. Remind them that their counselors, teachers and parents are prepared to help them make decisions and plans regarding posthigh school education and career.